



TELEPHONE INTERRUPTIONS



Scan to review worksheet

Expemo code:

14CB-XSA8-6TE



1

Warm-up

In what situations can a phone call interruption have a negative effect on your work or business? How can you handle such interruptions?

2

Handling interruptions

Read the following dialogues in pairs:

- A: Hello Robert, I'm afraid **I can't talk right now**. I'm in a meeting.
- B: Sandra, I **just wanted to ask you** a quick question. **I'll only be a second**.
- A: **OK, if it's very quick**. Go ahead.
-
- A: Hi it's John. **Have you got a minute?**
- B: Actually, I'm **in the middle of something**. **Is it something quick?**
- A: Yes, I **just wanted to know** ...

Which of the expressions in bold are used to:

1. avoid speaking to the caller?
2. encourage the caller to keep it brief?
3. encourage the receiver to listen?





Now put the following expressions in the above categories:

I'm a bit busy at the moment.

Can I call you back later?

This won't take long.

Can it wait?

You've got about 30 seconds.

I'll be really quick.

Is it something urgent?

OK, try to make it short.

Do you have a moment?

3

Practice

Now complete the following dialogue with appropriate words and expressions from the above exercise. More than one expression may be possible for some gaps.

Dialogue 1

A: Hello, Adam Lewis speaking.

B: Hi Adam, it's Juan Carlos. Have _____¹?

A: Hello Juan. I'm afraid, I'm _____² of a meeting right now. Can _____³?

B: Adam, _____⁴. I have to catch a train in a few minutes and I just wanted to ask you a quick question.

A: OK, if _____⁵. Go _____⁶.

B: Do you know if the conference room is booked for 3 pm? We are starting our English course at that time.

A: I'm pretty sure it's free, but I'll call you back in 15 minutes to confirm.

B: OK, thanks Adam. I'll speak to you later. Bye.

Dialogue 2

A: Hello.

B: Hi Abdul, it's Dieter Hahn. Do _____⁷?

A: Is _____⁸? I've got a very important conference call in about a minute.

B: Abdul, _____⁹. I just wanted to give you an update on the situation with our server.

A: OK, you've _____¹⁰.

B: Well, we've managed to find the source of the problem, and it looks like it will be fixed by the end of the day.

A: OK, thanks Dieter. That's good news. Keep me posted on the latest developments. I really have to go now. Goodbye.





4

Role play

Work with a partner. Role-play the situation below. Repeat the activity several times, changing roles for each call.

Student A: Think of a question that you need to ask your partner. Call him/her and try to get the answer.

Student B: You receive a phone call. You are busy doing something. Try to avoid speaking on the phone for too long.

